

**TITLE 1: GOVERNMENT**  
**DIVISION 3: JUDICIAL BRANCH**

**§ 3101. Establishment of Supreme Court.**

There is hereby established, in the judicial branch of the Commonwealth government, the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Admissions to the bar are to be governed by the Supreme Court.

**Source:** PL 6-25, § 3, ch. 1 (§ 3101).

**Commission Comment:** According to PL 6-25, § 2:

Section 2. Statement of Purpose and Policy. The Legislature recognizes that pursuant to [Covenant § 402] the Commonwealth reserved to itself all rights to control the appellate jurisdiction of its courts, and to invest such appellate jurisdiction in such court or courts as in its discretion it deemed appropriate. The Legislature also recognizes that pursuant to the Covenant it chose to invest that jurisdiction, by means of [PL 1-5], in the District Court of the Northern Mariana Islands, and that in the exercise by the District Court of the jurisdiction so invested, the District Court has at all times in this capacity acted as a court of the Northern Mariana Islands as that term is used in [Covenant § 403]. It is the policy of the Legislature to retain full sovereignty over the investiture of jurisdiction in the courts which construe the laws of the Commonwealth. It is the purpose of this Act to withdraw the appellate jurisdiction previously invested in the District Court, and to transfer that jurisdiction to the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth which is created in this Act. It is the intent of the Legislature to recognize that until the expiration of fifteen years after the enactment of [PL 1-5] final decisions of the Commonwealth Supreme Court will be appealable to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, as is provided by [Covenant § 403(a)], and that upon the expiration of that period all final decisions of the Supreme Court will be appealable thereafter only to the United States Supreme Court.

See, N.M.I. Const. art. IV, which contains the new constitutional provisions concerning the Commonwealth Judiciary enacted by House Legislative Initiative 10-3, HS1, HD1 (1997) (the full text of this House Legislative Initiative can be found on the Law Revision Commission's website at <http://cnmilaw.org>). With respect to the Commonwealth Supreme Court's authority over admissions to the bar, see 1 CMC § 3601 et seq.